

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani (Allah is pleased with him)

Introduction

Ghauth al-Azam Sheikh Muhiyuddin Abdul Qadir al-Hasani al-Hussaini al-Jeelani al-Baghdadi (Allah is pleased with him) was indeed one of the most influential and respected Sufi mystics of his blessed time. He was a scholar, theologian, author, orator, poet, a Sufi Mystic and a revered Saint of his time. Millions of Muslims today follow his Sufi order known as the Qadiri order. He is such a renowned personality of the Islamic history that people in all the parts of the world especially Muslims love, respect and admire him for his services for Islam. The era in which the blessed Sheikh was born was a chaotic one; there was widespread alcoholism, adultery and corruption in the land, people had forgotten the teachings of Islam and its values. In such a morally dystopian land it was not an easy task to reform the people and bring them back towards the teachings of Islam. But, the universe witnessed how this blessed personality endowed his whole life towards bringing the common folks towards the path of the Almighty. His teachings were of *Tawhid*, *Imaan*, *Ishq* and *mysticism*. Not only the common people; he was respected by scholars, saints, kings and sultans all alike. Despite this he never let his desires overpower him and remained firmed on the path of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). Kings offered him loads of wealth and princely gifts but he turned all of them down; as his path was of *Faqr* not *Sulatani*. As Muhammad Iqbal poet of the east has put it:

میر اطہر امیری نہیں فقیری ہے، خودی نہ تھی غربی میں نام پیدا کر

In this article we will try to explore the life and works of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani (Allah is pleased with him) in short and concise manner. And try to understand how we can improve our surroundings by implementing the teachings of the blessed Sheikh in our own lives and preaching them to the common public. Sufis and saints have been an important and indispensable part of the Islamic heritage, which is being forgotten by many people. Thus, it will also be an attempt to rejuvenate the spirit of *Tasawwuf* in the contemporary times where materialism and opportunistic tendencies are becoming common. “*Tasawwuf*” in reality is that which is written in the books and that which has been practiced by the Saints.

It has nothing to do with the allegations being raised against it and the people who disobey the *Shariah* and claim to be Sufi, in reality they are the pseudo-Sufis who are nothing more than friends of Satan.

Birth and Upbringing of the Shiekh

Hadhrat Ghauth al-Azam Sheikh Muhiyyuddin Abdul Qadir al-Hasani al-Hussaini al-Jeelani al-Baghdadi (Allah is pleased with him) was born on 1st of Ramadan 470 hijrah coinciding with 1075 A.D on a Friday in Geel or Geelan which is 7 miles from Baghdad in Iraq, the Arabs called it Jeel or Jeelan hence he was called Jeelani.^[1] Jeel was small village with less population, but the people there were pious and so were the ancestors of the Sheikh.^[2] He was from the Hasani and Hussaini Sayyeds. His father's name was Syed Abu Saleh Moosa JangiDost who was the 11th descendant of Imam Hasan (Allah is pleased with him) and his mother's name was Fatima Ummul Khair who was the 14th descendant of Imam Hussain (Allah is pleased with him) hence he was given the title "*Najeeb ut-Tarafain*".^[3] His father, mother his maternal grandfather Hadhrat Abdullah Somayi and his paternal aunt Syedah Aisha were all Sufi saints who were famous in the whole era for their miracles.^[4] His mother states that he was such a miraculous boy that even during the breastfeeding period as he was born in Ramadan he wouldn't drink milk from the sunrise till sunset as if he started fasting from the time he was born.^[5] His mother states that since his blessed birth it was spread in the whole town that a boy is born in the house of the Sayyeds who doesn't drink milk in daytime during Ramadan.^[6] His eminence, Sheikh himself states that during his childhood whenever he used to see other children play and the very thought of playing would come to his mind he would listen a voice saying "Where to O Blessed one?" and he would immediately be terrified and would drop the idea of play.^[7] Such was the grandeur and piety of the blessed Sheikh even at such a tender age. There is also a narration that when people asked him "when did you come to know that you are a Wali?" his eminence Sheikh replied that when I was ten years old and used to go to the *Maktab* (elementary school for basic education) angels of Allah used to accompany me till the I would reach the *Maktab* and when inside it they would say "Make way for a Wali of Allah is coming"^[8] It is indeed the grace of Allah and he gives it to whomever he wishes. This narration is also a

clear evidence that the Sheikh had great stations in the Auliya even when he was a small child.

His Piety and Righteousness

The blessed Sheikh was no doubt the epitome of righteousness in his era. He was so pious and Allah fearing that he would spend his days fasting and nights in prayer. He is one of those saints who spent their whole lives worshiping and Allah and gaining great stations in *Tasawwuf* through fighting their desires (*Nafs*) and training their inner self to be in a constant state of connection with the almighty. His eminence was himself one of the Blessed Sheikhs who would journey the spiritual realm and master the spiritual sensibilities. He would see the apparent (*Zahir*) and the esoteric (*Batin*) alike. Regarding his piety and righteousness he said: "For Forty years I have performed the Fajr prayer with the Wudhu of Isha". [9] Which, clearly means that he spent his nights without sleep and worshiping Allah for 40 years. It is also mentioned that he would read the whole Qur'an in one night and would do this every night for 40 years.[10] Though, such a notion may sound impossible in today's materialistic world where people are so weak that they cannot continue prayer for even 20 minutes; it was true in that golden era and it is possible for the people who actually are engrossed in the love of the almighty Allah. Sheikh Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Abul Fatah Harvi (Allah's mercy be upon him) states that he remained in the service of the Blessed Sheikh for forty years and the Sheikh would pray Fajr prayer with the Wudhu of Isha (he would spend the whole night praying) and it was his habit that as soon as his Wudhu would break he would immediately perform the Wudhu and pray two cycles of prayer. After performing the Isha prayer he would go into seclusion and would get engrossed in the remembrance of Allah the exalted. During this time none would disturb him or meet him and he would remain such till the Fajr time. Even the Caliph came to visit him in these hours several times and went away empty handed. [11] He did not used to preach with his sermons in his early times then one day he saw The Prophet (peace be upon him) in a dream and He (peace be upon him) said to the Sheikh "O My Beloved Progeny! Why don't you preach?" Sheikh replied: "Master, I am a non-Arab and how do I preach in front of the eloquent speakers of Baghdad?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) placed his blessed Saliva in his mouth seven times and he woke up, then after some time he saw Hadhrat Ali (may

Allah increase his grandeur) and asked the same question from the Sheikh and then placed his blessed Saliva in the Sheikh's mouth one time, after which he went away. When the Sheikh woke up he became so eloquent in Arabic and Persian that even the masters of linguistics would envy him and he became a gifted orator. He started to preach and lots and lots of people would gather to listen him. Even, though his gatherings were frequent people would gather in great numbers. And it was his miracle that the person sitting in the back would listen same as the person sitting in front. [12]

How he became the Reviver of Islam

He was blessed and gifted person since his birth and it was clear that Allah had chosen him to be a great saint. As stated earlier the people of his time had indulged into many practices which were against Islam. Such as a group emerged who was extremist regarding their school of jurisprudence and would vilify the people of other schools. Hence, the Blessed Sheikh tackled this problem in one of his writings "*Al-Ghuniya li-Talib al-Tareeq al-Haq*" famously known as "*Ghuniyat-ut-Talibeen*" he writes : "It is not permissible for a follower of one school of jurisprudence to vilify the follower of the other it is only possible if anyone is acting against the consensus (*Ijma*)". [13]

Not only this he reformation movement addressed all the sections of the society; the scholars, kings, Sufis, common folks and even the non-Muslims. His delivered his sermons admonishing the scholars to be sincere and not become a slave of money and staying with the rich people. He admonished the Sufis to become independent from the world and stated that it is crucial for a Sufi to first acquire the proper knowledge of Shariah especially Qur'an, Hadith and Fiqh as without them a person would become astray from the blessed path. He advised the kings and princes to be just in their matters and always to fear Allah. Once, a king sent some gold coins for the Sheikh as a gift. The Sheikh took the pouch of gold and squeezed it; the people were astonished to see that blood was dripping from the pouch. The Sheikh said "How can I take the money which has been stained by the blood of the innocent". This made the king repent and to rectify his ways. Through his writings, his sermons, his *Dhikr* and *Mawlid* gatherings the Sheikh rectified numerous lives and made them true followers of Islam and upon the true path of *Tawhid* and *Risalah*. [14]

Conclusion

This was indeed a small glimpse from the shining life and works of the blessed Ghauth al-Azam Sheikh Muhiyyuddin Abdul Qadir al-Hasani al-Hussaini al-Jeelani al-Baghdadi (Allah is pleased with him) and with this we must understand the importance of staying firm on the teachings of Islam and the blessed path of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah and to be true adherents of it. Also, the importance of the Qadiri order and its services for the preaching of Islam. May Allah bless us to follow in the footsteps of the Blessed Sheikh (Allah's mercy be upon him).

References

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4. same as [3] pg. 99
5. Bahjah-al-Asraar (Arabic), Muassassat-ul-Ashraf Lahore, pg. 44
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7. Bahjah-al-Asraar (Arabic), Muassassat-ul-Ashraf Lahore, pg. 48
8. same as [7] pg. 48
9. same as [7] pg. 118
10. same as [3] pg. 104
11. same as [7] pg. 57
12. same as [7] pg. 181
13. Seerat-i-Gauth-ul-Azam, Al-Barkaat Research Center, Aligarh, Article 19, pg. 282
14. same as [13] pg. 283